DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 425 413 CG 028 983

AUTHOR Walz, Garry R.; Bleuer, Jeanne C.
TITLE Emerging Priorities and Emphases in School Counseling, Guidance, and Student Services.
PUB DATE 1997-07-00
NOTE 8p.; In: China-U.S. Conference on Education. Collected Papers. (Beijing, People's Republic of China, July 9-13, 1997); see CG 028 968.
PUB TYPE Information Analyses (070) -- Speeches/Meeting Papers (150)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Elementary Secondary Education; *School Counseling; *School Guidance; Student Personnel Services
IDENTIFIERS Computer Use; ERIC

ABSTRACT

School counseling has evolved from a limited service into a schoolwide program focused on the developmental needs of all children. Five crucial components of school counseling programs are discussed: (1) delivery of guidance and counseling through a comprehensive K-12 developmental program; (2) involvement of parents and communities; (3) utilization of educational technology by both counselors and students; (4) targeting of new areas of student knowledge and skill; and (5) emphasis on student outcomes from counseling. Current efforts for change and improvement are focused on these components. Some undergirding principles for understanding school counseling programs are presented in the areas of behavioral objectives, students' responsibility for renewing life and career decisions, teaching self-improvement and coping skills, and understanding the context of interrelated systems from which the student operates. Comprehensive school guidance programs are committed to assisting students of all ages to become responsible for planning and managing their own lives. Improving guidance interactions and access to educational media through the use of computers is discussed; access to the Internet can provide access to a new world of knowledge. ERIC services are described. Counseling is increasingly being evaluated by the outcomes of students rather than the qualifications of counselors. (EMK)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED 425 413

Chapter Fifteen

Emerging Priorities and Emphases in School Counseling, Guidance, and Student Services

Garry R. Walz & Jeanne C. Bleuer

Introduction

School counseling has been a staple of American public education for over fifty years. It has emerged from a service for a limited number of students with special needs to a schoolwide program focused on the developmental needs of ***all students***. It is offered as an integral part of the school curriculum from pre-kindergarten to post high school.

This paper will focus on five components which have won general consensus as characteristic of educationally and psychologically sound school counseling programs for all students. The external features of a school counseling program nay vary depending upon local conditions and priorities. But the basic principles of an optimum school counseling program are well established and have won broad support from counseling and educational professional organizations.

The five components to be discussed are:

1. Delivery of guidance and counseling through a comprehensive K-12 developmental program.
2. Involvement of parents and communities in the school counseling program.
3. Utilization of educational technology by both counselors and students.
4. Targeting of new areas of student knowledge and skill.
5. Emphasis on student outcomes from counseling rather than counseling program inputs.

These five components do not constitute all (or necessarily the most important aspects) of present day American school counseling programs. They do, however, represent contemporary thinking as to what are the crucial aspects of a school counseling program and where the emphasis on change and improvement is currently focused.

Undergirding Counseling Principles

The five components which are to be discussed can best be understood

CG028983

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

G. Walz

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

by reference to a few undergirding principles of a school counseling program.

1. There are clear and definable counseling behavioral objectives appropriate for student learning and performance at each grade level.
2. Students should be prepared to assume responsibility for and have the requisite skills for making and continually updating life/career decisions and plans.
3. Learning about oneself and how one can continually improve his/her ability to cope with and adapt to varying external conditions is an important focus of school counseling.
4. Every student is a member of a number of systems, e.g., family, peers, school class, etc., each of which influences the student and, in turn, is influenced by the student.

These four principles, more illustrative than definitive, provide a brief overview of the basics of school counseling. Perhaps the most basic concept of all is that comprehensive developmental school counseling programs are committed to assisting students of all ages to acquire the knowledge and skill requisite to taking the responsibility for planning and managing their lives. Paraphrasing an old saying, give a person a fish and you feed him/her for a day; teach the person how to fish and you feed him/her for a lifetime.

Crucial Components of Educationally and Psychologically Sound School Counseling Programs

1. Delivery of guidance and counseling through a comprehensive K-12 developmental program.

Traditionally, guidance and counseling programs have been seen as an ancillary service separate from the regular school curriculum which helps students overcome immediate school and personal problems. Extensive absences or poor attention in class are typical examples.

The new *Comprehensive Guidance Program* model is an integral and vital component of the student's educational environment. It is developmental rather than problem-oriented; it focuses on prioritized student goals and behavioral outcomes for each grade level; and it is designed to be a regular part of the school curriculum. The comprehensive approach has the large advantage of helping all students to develop their potentials and to become more of what they are capable of becoming.

It also calls for the counselor to coordinate the participation of teachers, parents and community members in the program. By involving significant members of a student's school, home and social life, the school counselor greatly increases the overall influence which counseling has on the student.

Research results confirm that the comprehensive, developmental approach promotes greater student satisfaction as well as teacher, parent, and community support. Particularly important is the increased learning of relevant skills and competencies for mastering lifelong learning and living.

2. Involvement of parents and communities in the school counseling program.

Experience and research have demonstrated the importance of parental and community involvement in guidance-driven activities such as career planning, school learning and achievement, and the acquisition of employability skills. Family and community involvement, when mediated by counselors, can greatly aid students in developing sustained motivation requisite to staying in school, excelling in school, adopting appropriate role models, and psychologically preparing for the school-to-work transition.

This involvement of family and community members has the highly desirable effect of giving students a feeling of being in touch with the "real world" arid preparing students for the challenges and opportunities it affords. The result is that they are likely to be both better motivated and more focused in their learning and life/career planning.

3. Use of instructional technology as an integral component of the school counseling program.

The intensive and extensive use of educational technology by counselor is having a positive impact on the number of students served and the quality of the service provided. In particular, three technological tools are benefitting the school counseling program:

a) computers, with the availability of a wide range of software including interactive CD-ROM programs;
b) the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) database and the counseling resources provided by the ERIC Clearinghouse on Counseling and Student Services (ERIC/CASS); and
c) the Internet with its many Websites and special features such as Listservs and virtual libraries.

Computers

Computers are the basic tools that provide access to other forms of educational media such as the ERIC database and the Internet. Recent years have also seen a great expansion in both the availability and the sophistication of counseling relevant software for use by students and/or counselors. Career guidance software is an excellent example of this type of counseling resource. When students are able to use computers on their own or in small groups to extend and enhance their learning and acquisition of information, the quality of the one-to-one interaction time between counselors and students is greatly increased.

ERIC and ERIC/CASS

ERIC (Educational Resources Information Center) is the world's largest educational database with approximately one million entries covering both documents and journals. It is the most frequently used educational database in the world with access provided through over 1,000 libraries and information centers in 27 countries around the world. ERIC is now searchable via the Internet with most documents entered since January, 1996, available in full-text.

The benefits of ERIC to school counseling fall into two basic benefits.) First is the huge array of information directly available to students and parents covering such counseling topics as career planning, school-to-work transition, learning and study skills, etc. Any student with Internet access is able to locate, read, and print out or download these materials.

The second benefit is the great boost ERIC provides for counselor staff development and professional renewal. ERIC can be used to provide information on specific questions or reviewed on a regular basis as a means of updating professional knowledge. Complete and detailed information on ERIC and its use is available in the booklet listed in the bibliography, *All About ERIC*, and on the ERIC Website at *http://www. aspensys. com/eric.*

Internet

The importance of the Internet has been likened to that of the printing press in terms of the greatness of its power to facilitate communication between people around the world. It offers information resources of unparalleled quantity and breadth, many of which are highly relevant to the goals of school counseling. At very low cost, a counselor in any location with Internet capability can access and use counseling resources that can greatly aid both the counselor and counselees.

The ability to send messages to other Internet users via electronic mail (e-mail), to access counseling-relevant Websites, and to join electronically in interaction with other counselors and students through Listservs without the usual limitations of time and distance are of major significance to counselors. In addition to the ERIC Website noted above, we believe that there are two additional Websites which would be of particular interest and use to those persons interested in school counseling. They are:

The ERIC/CASS Website at: http://www.uncg.edu/edu/ericcass
The American School Counselor Association Website at: http://www.edge.net/asca/

Of particular interest on the ERIC/CASS Website are the links to counseling relevant virtual libraries. For example, one link (http://www.uncg.edu/edu/ericcass/career/index.html) provides the user with a wide array of full-text resources dealing with career development and another link

array of full-text resources dealing with career development and another link (http://www.uncg.edu/edu/ericcass/achieve/index.htm) contains many full-text resources dealing with student learning and achievement. Virtual libraries of resources on school violence, substance abuse, school-to-work transition, and multiculturalism will be available in late 1997.

An additional very valuable Internet resource which school counselors can access through electronic mail is the AskERIC service. By sending a question by e-mail to askeric@ericir.syr.edu anyone can receive a personal e-mail response from one of ERIC's network information specialists within two business days. The response will include a list of citations that deal with the topic as well as references to other Internet resources that contain additional information.

4. Targeting of new areas of student knowledge and skill.

Research has demonstrated the importance for students to gain mastery in a number of behavioral areas. Among these are:

(a) problem solving and decision making;
(b) social competence in relating to and working with others;
(c) resilience and invulnerability to deprivations (the ability to overcome setbacks and even turn negative events into positive developmental experiences); and
(d) the "new basics" essential to performance in today's workplace (e.g., teaming, networking, listening, group decision making).

Evident in the selection of these new school counseling outcomes is a strong proactive orientation, i.e., empowering youth with the personal insights and the knowledge and skills requisite to their being able to contribute in a world class economy where personal knowledge and skill are the quintessential resources of importance.

These and other subjects constitute a core counseling curriculum of mastery skills which counselors and comprehensive guidance programs offer students to empower them to more effectively cope with living, learning, and working in today's world.

5. Emphasis on student outcomes from counseling rather than counseling program inputs.

Traditionally, the worth of counseling has been determined by the qualifications of the persons providing the counseling services, e.g., degrees held, years of experience, etc., the ratio of students to counselors (the fewer students per counselor the better the program), the size and quality of the counseling facilities, and the number and quality of material resources. Hence, a counseling program with experienced counselors holding advanced degrees who had small counseling loads and access to vast space and resources was, by definition, a good program. Currently, the emphasis has shifted from a focus on program inputs to a focus on student outcomes, i.e., what students are able

to do after counseling that they were not able to do before counseling. This new highly refreshing emphasis is essentially on whether counseling makes a difference in student learning and behavior. And, if so, in what areas and how much? The results of this outcome research are helping counselors to focus on those activities which will make a demonstrable difference in their students. The result is both more effective and more efficient school counseling programs.

We conclude this session by bringing you greetings from the Director of the U.S. Department of Education National Library of Education, Blane Dessy. He extends his congratulations on the conference and invites you to undertake a virtual visit by accessing the National Library of Education (http://www.ed.gov/NLE) and the ERIC Websites. And, to enhance access to the ERIC Internet resources by Chinese counselors and educators, we would like to propose that the ERIC and the China Education and Research Network (CERNET) develop linkages to one another's Websites.

References

ACCESS ERIC. (1995). *All About ERIC.* Rockville, MD: Author.

ACCESS ERIC. (1996). *The ERIC Review, 5 (1, 2).*

Bloom, J. (Ed.). (1996). *Comprehensive Competency-Based Guidance.* Greensboro, NC: ERIC/CASS Publications.

Feller, R., & Walz, G. (Eds.). (1997). *Career transitions in turbulent times: Exploring work, learning and careers.* Greensboro, NC: ERIC/CASS Publications.

Gysbers, N., & Henderson, P. (1997). *Comprehensive Guidance programs that work - II.* Greensboro, NC: ERIC/CASS Publications.

Herr, E. L. (1995). *Counseling employment bound youth.* Greensboro, NC: ERIC/CASS Publications.

Hinkle, J.S., & Wells, M.E. (1995). *Family counseling in the schools: Effective strategies and interventions for counselors, psychologists and therapists.* Greensboro, NC: ERIC/CASS Publications.

Pederson, P. B., & Locke, D.C. (Eds.). (1996). *Cultural and diversity issues in counseling* Greensboro, NC: ERIC/CASS Publications.

Sexton, T.L., Whiston, S.C., Bleuer, J.C., & Walz, G.R. (1997). *Integrating outcome research into counseling practice and training* Alexandria, VA: American Counseling Association.

Walz, G.R., & Bleuer, J.C. (Eds.). (1992). *Developing support groups for students.* Ann Arbor, MI: ERIC Counseling and Personnel Services Clearinghouse.